

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENNA 00376 01 OF 02 180125Z
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 VIENNA 00376

USIAEA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: IAEA, OREP
SUBJECT: VISIT OF U.S. REPRESENTATIVES WYDLER AND BEVILL

SUMMARY: ON JANUARY 9, 1978, U.S. REPRESENTATIVES
JOHN WYDLER AND THOMAS BEVILL, TOGETHER WITH SUPCOMMITTEE
STAFF MEMBERS M. GREER, G. URIAN AND D. BROTHER VISITED
THIS MISSION AND THE IAEA. AT THE AGENCY THE VISITORS
HAD DISCUSSIONS WITH TWO DIFFERENT IAEA GROUPS AND A
PRIVATE DISCUSSION WITH THE DIRECTOR GENERAL. HIGHLIGHTS
FOLLOW. END SUMMARY.

1. MISSION - DURING THE HOUR SPENT HERE, THE VISITORS
WERE BRIEFED ON THE ORGANIZATION AND ACTIVITIES OF THE
IAEA AND THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE MISSION, THE
EMBASSY AND THE IAEA. AFTER SOME DISCUSSION ON THESE
SUBJECTS, REPRESENTATIVES BEVILL AND WYDLER INDICATED
THAT WHILE THEY SUPPORTED CURRENT U.S. EFFORTS TO
MINIMIZE THE PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS, THEY DID
NOT SUPPORT THE ADMINISTRATION'S POSITION ON THE CLINCH
RIVER BREEDER REACTOR, NOR THE REPROCESSING OF SPENT
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PAGE 02 VIENNA 00376 01 OF 02 180125Z

REACTOR FUEL, NOR THE DE-EMPHASIS OF THE NUCLEAR OPTION
IN THE ADMINISTRATION'S NATIONAL ENERGY PLAN. THEY,
THEREFORE, ASKED IF THIS MISSION WAS PROMOTING INTER-
NATIONAL ACCEPTANCE OF THESE POSITIONS AND IF SO, WHAT
RESPONSE DID THE AGENCY AND ITS MEMBER STATES HAVE? THE
CONGRESSMEN WERE ADVISED THAT: 1) WHILE THE MISSION DID
NOT OVERTLY PRESS THESE POSITIONS ON OTHERS, IT DID TAKE

CARE TO ASSURE THAT QUESTIONS REGARDING THEM WERE ANSWERED AS THOROUGHLY AS POSSIBLE; 2) THE AGENCY COULD NOT RESPOND FORMALLY TO THESE POSITIONS; 3) A NUMBER OF MEMBER STATES DO NOT SUPPORT THE ADMINISTRATION'S POSITIONS; AND 4) INFCE WAS THE MECHANISM BY WHICH THE ADMINISTRATION EXPECTED TO INFLUENCE INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR ATTITUDES.

2. IAEA

- A. ENERGY POLICY ISSUES - THIS WIDE-RANGING GROUP DISCUSSION CENTERED ON THE AGENCY'S BUDGET AND PROGRAMS IN SUPPORT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY, THORIUM FUELED POWER REACTORS, WASTE DISPOSAL, INFCE AND THE PROSPECTS FOR ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES SUCH AS FUSION AND SOLAR. THE CONGRESSMEN EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE U.S. FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE AGENCY (PERCENT OF TOTAL BUDGET), THE VALUE TO THE U.S. OF THE AGENCY'S ACTIVITIES AND THE DEGREE TO WHICH THE CURRENT ADMINISTRATION'S POSITION ON BREEDERS, REPROCESSING AND NUCLEAR POWER UTILIZATION WAS MAKING THE AGENCY'S JOB TO ADVANCE THE USE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY MORE DIFFICULT. THE VISITORS MADE CLEAR THE FACT THAT THEY AND OTHERS IN CONGRESS DID NOT SUPPORT ALL OF THE PRESIDENT'S NUCLEAR POSITIONS. THE AGENCY'S REPRESENTATIVES STATED THAT THEY PERCEIVED THAT THERE

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PAGE 03 VIENNA 00376 01 OF 02 180125Z

WAS GENERAL INTERNATIONAL CONSENSUS ON SOME OF THESE ISSUES:

- 1) THE CURRENT U.S. POSITION WOULD NOT CHANGE OR SIGNIFICANTLY INFLUENCE THE NUCLEAR PROGRAMS OF IAEA MEMBER STATES. THERE IS A FIRM INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENT TO THE LIQUID METAL COOLED FAST BREEDER. ONLY THE BREEDER CAN GIVE ENERGY INDEPENDENCE TO THOSE COUNTRIES WHO, UNLIKE THE U.S., HAVE NO OTHER ENERGY OPTION. THE U.S. POSITIONS WILL CAUSE IT TO LOSE ITS NUCLEAR LEADERSHIP ROLE AND BUSINESS ORDERS.
- 2) THE THORIUM -U233 FUEL CYCLE IS NO EASIER TO SAFEGUARD THAN THE URANIUM -PU FUEL CYCLE.
- 3) RECYCLE OF PU AS A FUEL IS NECESSARY BECAUSE OF ITS ENERGY CONTENT AND THE UNCERTAINTY OF THE AVAILABILITY OF URANIUM SUPPLIES.
- 4) INFCE IS ACTIVELY SUPPORTED BY IAEA MEMBER STATES NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF THE DESIRE TO MINIMIZE THE RISK OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROLIFERATION BUT BECAUSE THE

TECHNICAL CONCLUSIONS IT WILL PRODUCE WILL REAFFIRM THE NEED FOR THE BREEDER AND PU RECYCLE.

- 5) NEITHER SOLAR NOR FUSION POWER WILL BE AVAILABLE ON A TIME SCALE WHICH WILL REDUCE THE NEED FOR NUCLEAR POWER.

- THE CONGRESSMEN SAID THEY WERE PLEASED TO HAVE THIS INFORMATION BECAUSE IT SUPPORTED THEIR OWN VIEWS, AND WOULD BE USEFUL IN THEIR CONGRESSIONAL WORK.

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PAGE 01 VIENNA 00376 02 OF 02 180134Z
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UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 VIENNA 00376

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- B. SAFEGUARDS - THE GROUP DISCUSSION ON THIS SUBJECT PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE AGENCY TO ACQUAINT THE VISITORS ON THE SCOPE OF IAEA SAFEGUARDS ACTIVITIES AND CLARIFY SOME APPARENT MISUNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT THE AGENCY'S PROGRAM AND RESPONSIBILITIES. THE CONGRESSMEN SAID THAT THEY WERE VERY FIRM SUPPORTERS OF THE AGENCY'S AND THE U.S.' SAFEGUARDS EFFORTS AND THAT THEY WERE OPTIMISTIC THAT THE CONGRESS WOULD, EARLY THIS YEAR, PASS LEGISLATION THAT WOULD IMPROVE THE SAFEGUARDABILITY OF SENSITIVE NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY AND NUCLEAR EXPORTS.

- C. DIRECTOR GENERAL - DURING THEIR BRIEF DISCUSSION WITH THE AGENCY'S DIRECTOR GENERAL, HE STRESSED THE FACT THAT THE AGENCY'S EXISTENCE AND EFFECTIVENESS WAS DUE PRIMARILY TO THE SUPPORT RECEIVED FROM THE U.S. THE CONGRESSMEN ASSURED HIM THAT HE COULD COUNT ON THE CONTINUATION OF THAT SUPPORT.

3. AT THE END OF THE DAY, THE STAFF MEMBERS TOLD US PRIVATELY THAT THE CONGRESSMEN WERE PLEASED WITH THEIR VISIT AND THAT THE INFORMATION GAINED WOULD BE VERY

USEFUL. STONE

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